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STATISTICAL COMMISSION
Twenty-sixth session
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Agenda item 15

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: J. A. MWANIKI (Kenya)

Chapter ____ . PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

1. The Commission considered item 14 of its agenda at its 448th meeting, on 12 February 1991. It had before it a note by the Secretariat containing the draft provisional agenda for its twenty-seventh session (E/CN.3/1991/L.3), which was orally amended in the light of suggestions and decisions made by the Commission at its current session. Other amendments and clarifications were made during the discussion of the draft provisional agenda itself. The revised draft provisional agenda along with the required documentation is contained in the annex below. The Commission requested that its Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination review the provisional agenda and related documentation at its fourteenth session and introduce any necessary modifications.

2. Several members proposed that agenda item 9 (Demographic and social statistics) be subdivided so as to deal separately with the population and housing censuses and civil registration and vital statistics. The Commission agreed that both topics should be covered in the report requested, along with other issues to be taken up under item 9. The Working Group would review the outline for that report in accordance with past practice and might wish to consider whether agenda item 9 should be divided into two or more sub-items, as required. It was also suggested that a report on development indicators be submitted under an appropriate

item. The Commission decided to refer the proposal to the Working Group for consideration in the light of the outcome of the forthcoming meeting in Morocco, which was being convened as a follow-up to the UNRISD study on qualitative aspects of development considered by the Commission at the present session under agenda item 9 (d).

3. With respect to documentation, the Commission emphasized the need to receive the documentation for its twenty-seventh session in good time. The Commission noted that if meaningful and in-depth discussions were to take place, the documentation must be made available to participants in all languages three months before the scheduled session. The Commission considered that the bulk of the documentation should be available in October. It urged the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat and other organizations preparing documents to adjust their submission of documents to accord with that schedule and requested that all documents, once submitted, be edited, translated and reproduced in a timely fashion.

4. With respect to item 3 of its provisional agenda (special topics), the Commission requested that the topic to be chosen by the Working Group at its fourteenth session. It considered that the special topic discussions provided an excellent opportunity to introduce flexibility into its agenda so that the Commission could respond to new needs as they emerged. Nevertheless, the Commission noted that the agenda for its twenty-seventh session contained several substantive items that might take considerable time to discuss. Accordingly, the Commission requested its Working Group to select a maximum of one special topic either from among the remaining items on the condensed list of special topics for future discussion contained in document E/CN.3/1991/L.3 or from other important issues raised during the course of the Commission's discussions at its twenty-sixth session. A number of possible topics were mentioned. From the remaining topics on the condensed list, several members recommended selecting statistical education and training, particularly in developing countries. One member recommended that the topic on the European single market be reformulated and placed in a broader context. Two other topics suggested for special discussion were: (a) the statistical implications of the debt burden and structural adjustment and the statistical needs arising from the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and (b) issues arising from the statement of the observer for Switzerland during the twenty-sixth session under agenda item 12. The Commission noted that both topics had been referred to the Working Group for further consideration and possible follow-up.

5. Several participants were of the view that the agenda of the Commission was very much the same from session to session and that a more fundamental restructuring might be in order. In that connection, one member proposed changing the order of discussion of agenda items for the twenty-seventh and subsequent sessions so that items holding more general interest (e.g. coordination, programme questions and technical cooperation) would be considered before the more specific topics. It was recalled that, in the past, when such an order of discussion was followed, the discussion of the topics of a more general nature tended to be diffuse and to reduce the value of the discussion of the specific substantive topics. The Commission considered that the Working Group might discuss that issue further.

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6. In connection with its consideration of the provisional agenda for the twenty-seventh session, the Commission addressed a number of issues, both general and specific, including (a) the means for improving coordination of the international work in statistics, (b) the role of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities, (c) the terms of reference of the Statistical Commission, (d) the means of improving the reconciliation of international trade statistics and estimates, (e) the role of the Commission with respect to the work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat and (f) how the Commission or its Working Group might be able to provide a mechanism that would permit an independent assessment of the NHSCP of the United Nations and the SDA and LSMS programmes of the World Bank.

7. The Commission recalled that at its twenty-fourth session, the Commission had considered its terms of reference at some length and that a summary of the terms of reference was also contained in the section of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 dealing with statistics. However, the Commission requested the Statistical Office to circulate information on the terms of reference to Commission members in advance of each session. The Commission also requested the Statistical Office to circulate copies of the reports of the annual meetings of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities to Commission members. Views were expressed that more work needed to be done on the reconciliation of international trade statistics and estimates and the Commission agreed that its Working Group might consider that matter further in the light of the discussions of the subject at the 1991 meeting of the ACC Sub-Committee. With regard to the independent evaluations of the United Nations and the World Bank survey programmes, the suggestion was made that copies of the available evaluations of those programmes should be provided to the Working Group.

Action taken by the Commission

8. Subject to final review by the Working Group, as outlined above, the Commission approved the provisional agenda and documentation for its twenty-seventh session (see the annex below). The Commission recommended that its twenty-seventh session be held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 February to 3 March 1993.

9. At its 450th meeting, on 13 February 1991, the Commission decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council the approval of the provisional agenda and documentation for its twenty-seventh session (see chap.____, sect.____, draft decision).

Annex

Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-seventh session
of the Statistical Commission

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Special topics (to be determined).
4. National accounts and balances.

Documentation

Report on the revision of the System of National Accounts (SNA)

Report on the implementation of the revised System of National Accounts (SNA)

Final draft of the revised System of National Accounts (SNA)

Report of the International Labour Office on the informal sector

5. International classifications.

Documentation

Report containing a review of national and international work and needs in the field of implementation of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), Rev.3, and the provisional Central Product Classification (CPC)

Report of the International Labour Office on the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE)

6. Industrial statistics.

Documentation

Report on the World Programme of Industrial Statistics

7. Service statistics.

Documentation

Report on the work done by national and international agencies in the field of service statistics

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8. Price statistics.

Documentation

Report on developments in the International Comparison Programme (ICP) and other related international comparison issues

9. Demographic and social statistics.

Documentation

Report on demographic and social statistics, including statistics on the advancement of women

10. Environment statistics.

Documentation

Report on progress made in environment statistics

11. Tourism statistics.

Documentation

Report of the World Tourism Organization on the International Conference on Tourism

12. General development and integration of methodological work.

Documentation

Report on general development and integration of methodological work

13. Technical co-operation.

Documentation

Report on technical co-operation in statistics

Report on the promotion of national household survey capabilities

Report on the Social Dimensions of Adjustment (SDA) project and the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) (World Bank)

Report on the programme to monitor achievement of social goals in the 1990s and related methodological work

14. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes.

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination on its fourteenth session

Report on the statistical work of international organizations

Report on the plans of international organizations in the field of statistics

15. Programme questions:

(a) Programme performance and implementation;

Documentation

Updated information on the work of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, including information on programme performance during the biennium 1990-1991

(b) Programme objectives and planning.

Documentation

Draft programme of work of the Statistical Office for the biennium 1994-1995 and proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1994-1997

16. Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission.

17. Report of the Commission on its twenty-seventh session.
